

## Opening Remarks

Good afternoon. I am Cliff Haka, Director of Libraries at Michigan State University and Chair of the Board of the Library of Michigan and I am pleased to welcome you to the Library of Michigan and this reception to honor Christie Brandau. Thank you for making the effort to be here in spite of the challenging weather conditions.

This is, of course, a bittersweet event. We naturally wish celebrate all that Christie has brought to us, what she has helped us to accomplish, and to congratulate her on her new opportunities, but at the same time we cannot escape the feeling of impending loss. Christie will be sorely missed. I have decided, however, that it was a far better thing to have Christie with us for five years and lose her, than to have never had her in our midst. So hopefully we can focus on this more positive perspective.

The first time I saw Christie I felt terribly sorry for her. That was because she had somehow been trapped into having a beer with Randy Dykhuis during an MLA meeting. What could be worse? In an attempt to soften Christie's agony, I joined them at the bar, and quickly came to understand a key component of Christie's character. Christie had just about finished her beer and began to look at the empty glass, and then at me, and then at the glass and then at me until I was forced to ask would you like another beer? Her look was something along the lines of what took you so long? This was the first of many examples of Christie knowing what she wanted, knowing how to get it, and even more impressive, knowing how to get someone else to pay for it!!

Seriously, these talents have served Christie, the Library of Michigan and the State of Michigan extremely well. Library efforts and statewide library cooperation have flourished under her leadership as never before, in spite of some extremely challenging budgetary downturns. While everyone in this room has probably dealt with some difficult budgetary situations during the last several years, I would be surprised if any of them has been more serious than what the Library of Michigan has endured. And yet, whenever a key issue would arise in discussions, Christie would always say, well, I don't know where the money is going to come from, but we simply have to do this. I'll figure something out. And she always did. I never heard her speak a discouraged word in the entire time that I have known her. She was always positive, upbeat and determined that we would find a way to get things done, and with her remarkable leadership, we always did.

## Closing Remarks

When I came to Michigan over 20 years ago, I left many good friends in Kansas. Recently another good friend moved to Kansas, and now I will be losing Christie to Kansas. Maybe I should go back to Kansas??

Please join me in recognizing a great friend and a great librarian, Christie Brandau.